

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1-8 and ADD new claims 9-12 in accordance with the following:

02 1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A ~~computer program for searching~~ computer-readable storage controlling a computer to search information using a computer, the computer program making the computer realize the steps ~~and comprising a process of:~~

~~extracting, from storing, in a knowledge database which stores~~ database, a plurality of causes, a plurality of questions having a cause-and-effect relation ~~relations~~ with the plurality of causes, and correlation levels showing a degree of ~~correlations~~ correlation between the causes and corresponding questions ~~questions~~;

extracting certain questions ~~out of~~ from the plurality of questions ~~by using~~ an algorithm based on the correlation levels;

displaying the certain questions to a user;

receiving answers from the user corresponding respectively to the certain questions; and

extracting causes with high correlation levels ~~out of~~ from the plurality of causes based on the answers from the user.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The ~~computer program~~ computer-readable storage according to claim 1, further ~~making the computer realize the step of comprising~~ assigning a priority to each of the extracted causes based on the correlation levels.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The ~~computer program~~ computer-readable storage according to claim 2, further ~~making the computer realize the step of comprising~~ displaying, as a search result, the extracted causes ~~as a search result~~ in colors, each color corresponding to one of the priorities.

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The ~~computer program~~ computer-readable storage according to claim 1, wherein said extracting causes comprises assigning a weight-is-assigned to each of the ~~answer results~~ answers in the cause-extracting step.

Q2 5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of searching information using an information search apparatus connected to a client via a network, the client being connected to an input device and a display, the method comprising the steps of:

extracting, from storing, in a knowledge database of the information search apparatus, which stores a plurality of causes, a plurality of questions having a cause-and-effect relation relations with the plurality of causes, and correlation levels showing a degree of correlations correlation between the causes and corresponding questions, questions;

extracting certain questions out of from the plurality of questions by using an algorithm based on the correlation levels; and

displaying, on the display, the certain questions to be answered by a user;

receiving answers from the user, via the network, corresponding respectively to the certain questions, the answers being input by the user using the input device; and

extracting causes with high correlation levels out of from the plurality of causes based on the answers from the user an answer result of each of the certain questions from a searcher.

6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of searching information according to claim 5, further comprising ~~the step of~~ assigning a priority to each of the extracted causes based on the correlation levels.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of searching information according to claim 6, further comprising ~~the step of~~ displaying, on the display as a search result, the extracted causes as a search result in colors, each color corresponding to one of the priorities.

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of searching information according to claim 5, wherein said extracting causes comprises assigning a weight-is-assigned to each of the ~~answer results~~ answers in the cause-extracting step.

Q2 9. (NEW) A system for searching information having an information search apparatus connected to a client via a network, the client being connected to an input device and a display, the information search apparatus comprising:

a knowledge database storing a plurality of causes, a plurality of questions having cause-and-effect relations with the plurality of causes, and correlation levels showing a degree of correlations between the causes and corresponding questions;

a first control unit extracting certain questions from the plurality of questions using an algorithm based on the correlation levels, displaying the certain questions to be answered by a user on the display, and receiving answers from the user via the network, the answers corresponding respectively to the certain questions and being input by the user using the input device; and

a second control unit extracting causes with high correlation levels from the plurality of causes based on the answers from the user.

10. (NEW) The system according to claim 9, wherein the second control unit assigns a priority to each of the extracted causes based on the correlation levels.

11. (NEW) The system according to claim 10, wherein the second control unit displays, on the display as a search result, the extracted causes in colors, each color corresponding to one of the priorities.

12. (NEW) The method of searching information according to claim 9, wherein the second control unit assigns a weight to each of the answers.
